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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/55/579/Add.1)*]

55/182. International trade and development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolutions 50/95 and 50/98 of 20 December 1995, 51/167 of 16 December 1996, 52/182 of 18 December 1997, 53/170 of 15 December 1998 and 54/198 of 22 December 1999, as well as relevant international agreements concerning trade, economic growth and development,

Taking note of the outcome of the tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held at Bangkok from 12 to 19 February 2000,[1] specifically the Bangkok Declaration: global dialogue and dynamic engagement[2] and the Plan of Action,[3] which provide an important framework for promoting a partnership for growth and development,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted by the heads of State and Government on 8 September 2000,[4]

Taking note of the Declaration and the Programme of Action adopted by the South Summit of the Group of 77, held at Havana from 10 to 14 April 2000,[5]

Emphasizing that a favourable and conducive international economic and financial environment and a positive investment climate are necessary for the growth of the world economy, including the creation of employment with equal opportunities for women and men, in particular for the growth and development of developing countries, and emphasizing also that each country is responsible for its own economic policies for sustainable development,

Noting the need for multilateral trade liberalization, and noting also that a large number of developing countries have assumed the rights and obligations of the World Trade Organization without being able to reap the full benefits of, and participate fully in, the multilateral trading system, and that there is a need for

[1] TD/390.
[2] Ibid., part I.
[3] Ibid., part II.
[4] See resolution 55/2.
[5] A/55/74, annexes I and II.

progress towards liberalization and enhanced market access, including in areas and products of particular interest to developing countries,

Noting also the importance of assisting developing countries in building their capacity, in accordance with their national priorities, to engage effectively in international trade,

Stressing that full and faithful implementation of the commitments and obligations in multilateral trade agreements is important to the equitable and sustainable development and stability of the world economy,

Strongly emphasizing the importance of providing all members of the World Trade Organization with the opportunity to engage fully and effectively in the process of multilateral trade negotiations and in other activities within the multilateral trading system in order to facilitate the attainment of balanced results with respect to the interests of all members,

Taking note of the report of the Trade and Development Board on its forty-seventh session,[6] the report of the Secretary-General on international trade and development and on the developments in the multilateral trading system,[7] and the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on the transit environment in the landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours,[8]

Noting, in the context of international trade and development, the ongoing work of the Commonwealth Secretariat/World Bank Joint Task Force on Small States,

1. *Recognizes* the importance of the expansion of international trade as an engine of growth and development and, in this context, the need for expeditious and complete integration of developing countries and countries with economies in transition into the international trading system, in full cognizance of the opportunities and challenges of globalization and liberalization and taking into account the circumstances of individual countries, in particular the trade interests and development needs of developing countries;

2. *Renews its commitment* to uphold and strengthen an open, rule-based, equitable, secure, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable multilateral trade system which contributes to the economic and social advancement of all countries and peoples, including equal opportunities for women and for men, by promoting the liberalization and expansion of trade, employment and stability and by providing a framework for the conduct of international trade relations;

3. *Expresses concern* at the declining terms of trade in most primary commodities, in particular for net exporters of such commodities, as well as the lack of progress in many developing countries in diversification, and, in this regard, strongly emphasizes the need for action at both the national and the international levels, inter alia, through improved market access conditions, addressing supply-side constraints and support for capacity-building, including in areas that actively involve women;

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[6] A/55/15 (Part IV). For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 15*.

[7] A/55/396.

[8] See A/55/320.

4. *Recognizes* that the substantial improvement of market access for exports of goods and services from developing countries through, inter alia, the reduction or removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers should be assigned high priority in multilateral trade negotiations;

5. *Urges* those countries that have announced market-access initiatives in favour of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, and have not yet fulfilled them to expedite the implementation of those initiatives, and calls upon other countries that have not yet done so to undertake similar initiatives;

6. *Deplores* any attempt to bypass or undermine multilaterally agreed procedures on the conduct of international trade by taking unilateral actions that are inconsistent with the multilateral trade rules and regulations, including those agreed upon in the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations;

7. *Expresses concern* about the proliferation of anti-dumping and countervailing measures, and stresses that they should not be used as protectionist measures;

8. *Reaffirms* the role of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development as the focal point within the United Nations for the integrated treatment of development and related issues in the areas of trade, finance, technology, investment and sustainable development;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and in line with the successful outcome of the tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to take the necessary measures to strengthen the management and enhance the programme delivery capacity and performance of the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in order to enable it to implement fully and effectively the outcome of its tenth session;

10. *Reiterates* the importance of continued trade liberalization in developed and developing countries, including in sectors of export interest to developing countries, through, inter alia:

(*a*) Substantial reductions of tariffs, the rolling back of tariff peaks and the removal of tariff escalation;

(*b*) The elimination of trade-distorting policies, protectionist practices and non-tariff barriers in international trade relations;

(*c*) Ensuring that resort to anti-dumping duties, countervailing duties, phytosanitary regulations and technical standards is subject to effective multilateral surveillance so that such measures respect and are consistent with multilateral trading rules and obligations and are not used for protectionist purposes;

(*d*) The improvement and renewal, by preference-giving countries, of their Generalized System of Preferences schemes with the objective of integrating developing countries, especially the least developed countries, into the international trading system and of finding ways and means to ensure more effective utilization of those schemes;

and, in this context, reiterates its original principles, namely, non-discrimination, universality, burden-sharing and non-reciprocity;

11. *Also reiterates* that it is an ethical imperative for the international community to arrest and to reverse the marginalization of the least developed countries and to promote their expeditious integration into the world economy and that all countries should work together towards further enhancement of duty- and quota-free market access for exports from the least developed countries within the context of supporting their own efforts at capacity-building; recognizes that the full implementation of the Plan of Action for the Least Developed Countries adopted at the first Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, held at Singapore from 9 to 13 December 1996, provides for further and expeditious progress towards duty-free imports from the least developed countries; invites the relevant international organizations to provide the enhanced technical assistance required to help to strengthen the supply and institutional capacity of the least developed countries so as to help them to take the fullest possible advantage of the trading opportunities that arise from globalization and liberalization, and, in this regard, reiterates the need for a speedy implementation of the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries; takes note of the preparatory activities being undertaken for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held at Brussels in May 2001; and, in this connection, calls upon development partners, in particular industrialized countries, to make efforts towards the adoption of a policy of duty- and quota-free access for essentially all exports originating in the least developed countries;

12. *Notes* the need to better coordinate trade-related technical assistance and, in this regard, to implement the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries in order to promote coordination among the six core agencies, bearing in mind that the resources made available should be utilized in line with their respective roles;

13. *Stresses* the urgent need to facilitate the integration of the countries of Africa into the world economy, and, in this context, takes note with appreciation of the action-oriented agenda for the development of Africa contained in the report of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on the Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa[9] and the recommendations contained therein; calls for continued efforts to increase market access for products of export interest to African economies and support for their efforts to diversify and build supply capacity, and, in this context, requests the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to continue to enhance its contribution to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s,[10] taking into account the agreed conclusions of the Trade and Development Board on Africa;[11] further encourages the Secretary-General of the United Nations to establish a new subprogramme on Africa, as agreed in the Plan of Action;[3] and emphasizes the importance of increased inter-agency cooperation, which has proven its relevance through the joint integrated technical assistance programmes for selected least developed and other African countries;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the initiation by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in the areas falling within its mandate, of the preparatory process for the final review and appraisal of the

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[9] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 45* (A/55/45).

[10] Resolution 46/151, annex, sect. II.

[11] A/54/15 (Part V), chap. I, sect. C, agreed conclusions 458 (XLVI). For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 15.*

implementation of the New Agenda, to be held in 2002, in particular focusing on market access, diversification and supply capacity, resource flows and external debt, foreign direct and portfolio investment and access to technology, and, in this context, also requests the Secretary-General to submit a report, based on the recommendations of the Trade and Development Board on Africa, on measures taken in this regard, with a special emphasis on African trade issues, for the consideration of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session under the agenda item entitled "International trade and development";

15. *Stresses* the need to give special attention, within the context of international cooperation on trade and development issues, to the implementation of the many international development commitments geared to meeting the special development needs and problems of small island developing States and of landlocked developing countries and to recognize that those developing countries that provide transit services need adequate support for the maintenance and improvement of their transit infrastructure;

16. *Reiterates* the need for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to enhance its contribution to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States[12] and the review document[13] in addressing the specific concerns of small island developing States in their efforts aimed at diversification, capacity-building and benefiting from improved market access opportunities for their effective integration into the global economy;

17. *Also reiterates* the importance of the effective application by all members of the World Trade Organization of all provisions of the Final Act Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations,[14] taking into account the specific interests of developing countries, so as to maximize economic growth and development benefits for all, and the need to address implementation issues seriously, as well as to implement effectively all of the special provisions in the multilateral trade agreements and related ministerial decisions in favour of developing countries, in particular by making operational and ensuring fuller implementation of the previously agreed special and differential provisions, including the strengthening of these concepts, taking into account the changing realities of world trade and globalization, and urges Governments and concerned international organizations to apply effectively the Ministerial Decisions on Measures in Favour of Least Developed Countries and on Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least Developed and Net Food-importing Developing Countries;[14]

18. *Recognizes* the importance of increasing trade liberalization, in particular as regards areas and products of interest to developing countries, and that further liberalization should be sufficiently broad-based to respond to the range of interests and concerns of all members within the framework of the World Trade Organization, and, in this regard, welcomes the activities of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development aimed at assisting developing countries in developing a

[12] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[13] See resolution S-22/2, annex.

[14] See *Legal Instruments Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, done at Marrakesh on 15 April 1994* (GATT secretariat publication, Sales No. GATT/1994-7).

positive agenda for future multilateral trade negotiations, and invites the secretariat of the Conference to continue to provide analytical support and technical assistance, including capacity-building activities, to those countries for their effective participation in the negotiations;

19. *Invites* members of the international community to consider the interests of non-members of the World Trade Organization in the context of trade liberalization;

20. *Invites* the international financial institutions to ensure that, in their development cooperation activities with developing countries, the obligations of the latter with regard to their development policies, strategies and programmes in trade and trade-related areas are consistent with their commitments under the framework of rules agreed upon within the multilateral trading system;

21. *Emphasizes* the importance of the strengthening of, and the attainment of greater universality by, the international trading system and of accelerating the process directed towards accession to the World Trade Organization of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, also emphasizes the necessity for Governments that are members of the World Trade Organization and relevant international organizations to assist non-members of the World Trade Organization so as to facilitate their efforts with respect to accession in an expeditious and transparent manner, on the basis of undertaking balanced World Trade Organization rights and obligations, and further emphasizes the necessity for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Trade Organization to provide technical assistance, within their mandates, that will contribute to the rapid and full integration of those countries into the multilateral trading system;

22. *Stresses* the need for improved measures to address the volatility of short-term capital flows as well as the effects of financial crises on the international trading system and the development prospects of developing countries and countries affected by such crises, emphasizing the fact that keeping all markets open and maintaining continued growth in world trade are key elements in overcoming such crises, and, in this context, rejects the use of any protectionist measures; also stresses, at a broader level, the need for greater coherence between the development objectives agreed to by the international community and the functioning of the international trading and financial system, and, in this context, calls for close cooperation between the members and observers of the organizations of the United Nations system and of the multilateral trade and financial institutions, with participation in accordance with their established rules, procedures and practices;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in scheduling and organizing mandated events on trade and trade-related issues, to promote complementarity in the work of the relevant bodies of the United Nations system and with the work of other international organizations, as appropriate, bearing in mind the mandate of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development;

24. *Recognizes* the importance of open regional economic integration in the creation of new opportunities for expanding trade and investment, stresses the importance of those initiatives being in conformity with the rules of the World Trade Organization, where applicable, and, bearing in mind the primacy of the multilateral trading system, affirms that regional trade agreements should be outward-oriented and supportive of the multilateral trading system, and, in this context, invites Governments and intergovernmental and multilateral institutions to continue to

provide support for economic integration among developing countries and among countries with economies in transition;

25. *Requests* the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to continue to identify and analyse the implications for development of issues relevant to investment and to identify ways and means of promoting foreign direct and portfolio investment directed to all developing countries, taking into account their interests, in particular to those most in need, as well as to those countries with economies in transition with similar needs, and bearing in mind the work undertaken by other organizations, including the regional commissions;

26. *Emphasizes* the fact that, in line with Agenda 21[15] and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[16] Governments should have the objective of ensuring that trade and environmental policies are mutually supportive so as to achieve sustainable development, and also emphasizes that, in so doing, their environmental policies and measures with a potential trade impact should not be used for protectionist purposes;

27. *Reaffirms* the role of competition law and policy for sound economic development, takes note of the important and useful work of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in this field, and, in this regard, decides to convene in 2005 a fifth United Nations Conference to Review All Aspects of the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices, under the auspices of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; [17]

28. *Emphasizes* that the dispute settlement mechanism of the World Trade Organization is a key element with regard to the integrity and credibility of the multilateral trading system and the full realization of the benefits anticipated from the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations;

29. *Strongly emphasizes* the need for technical assistance, including legal assistance, to developing countries through, inter alia, the Advisory Centre on World Trade Organization Law and other mechanisms, to enable those countries to take the fullest possible advantage of the dispute settlement mechanism of the World Trade Organization, based on multilaterally agreed rules and regulations, and, in this context, also emphasizes that it is important for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to continue to strengthen its technical assistance to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States in this area;

30. *Notes* the increasing importance and application of electronic commerce in international trade and the need to strengthen the capacities of developing countries to participate effectively in electronic commerce; urges the organizations of the United Nations system, within their mandates and in cooperation with other relevant bodies, with the participation of their secretariats and the States Members of the United Nations and observer States, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the International Telecommunication Union, the International Trade Centre and the regional commissions, to continue to assist developing

[15] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[16] Ibid., annex I.

[17] See TD/RBP/CONF.5/15.

countries and countries with economies in transition; emphasizes in this regard the need for analysis of the fiscal, legal and regulatory aspects of electronic commerce, as well as its implications for the trade and development prospects of developing countries; and, in this connection, welcomes the Ministerial Declaration entitled "Development and international cooperation in the twenty-first century: the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy" adopted by the Economic and Social Council during the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2000;[18]

31. *Stresses* the importance of assisting developing countries and interested countries with economies in transition in improving the efficiency of trade-supporting services, inter alia, through the elimination of procedural barriers and by greater use of trade facilitating mechanisms, in particular in the areas of transport, customs, banking and insurance, and business information, especially in the case of small and medium-sized enterprises, and, in this respect, invites the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in accordance with its mandate and in collaboration with other relevant bodies of the United Nations, including the regional commissions, to continue to assist developing countries in those areas;

32. *Requests* the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in collaboration with the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session on the implementation of the present resolution and developments in the multilateral trading system.

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20 December 2000

[18] A/55/3, chap. III, para. 17. For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 3*.